

# INNIS HERALD

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— MASTHEAD —

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— PRÉCIS —

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— NOTES —

*This is our last issue of the year. Please see our website for details on becoming part of next year's Innis Herald executive.*

*The Innis Herald is usually published during the third full week of each month during the Fall and Winter terms. Meeting dates and deadlines may be found on our website. We hope to hear from you in the next year.*

*All submissions are welcome.*

## Lonely waltzes from the 34th Opus

**SHE** was about my mother's height, maybe taller - with thick dark hair, too much hair. And she stood right beside me. She leaned forward, put her hand on my shoulder and said, « You're only worth the dreams you dream ». A genius in the crowd. It's always that way - the most brilliant minds and the strongest words can be found watching from the sidelines. It was after thinking for hours about everything that I fell asleep and it all made sense...

Note after note, the bass holding out to break your heart, wavering and stumbling out of the cafe somewhere in the middle of the Latin Quarter, you walk in and watch from the shadows. Your own black stage crew. He sits just behind the bar, in a suit. Dark, but not like the colour, like he put a rain cloud over his head. It would only make sense in black and white, besides, you weren't looking that closely. There he is, with a glass of whiskey with two ice cubes. He is either in love or else dying because his eyes are different colours. There is so much smoke that you can't hear him say his name, it sounded like he said Lucifer, but that couldn't be. He writes stories. « I write stories ». He says. He doesn't eat with his left hand, bad luck or something.

Once upon a time, he says - the writer, there was a room with a room on top and the walls were made of bookcases and if you took one book out the whole place would collapse. So one day a man and a woman walked in and they took off their coats and shoes and sat down in the middle of the floor and they fell asleep. When they woke up there was a whole meal laid out for them on the floor. And the room was full of lamps. Like a lamp store, only they don't have any price tags so it's more like a lamp museum. Or just a room full of lamps. That night she jumped off a bridge, only she died before she reached the water. She was in a hurry. He felt so bad that he



turned off all the lights and had a moment of silence in the dark. He found a big black pen and he wrote on the wall, he wrote: there's no such thing as falling in love because the bridge is too far from the water and besides I can't swim. He's the guy who once accidentally rode the train to the moon because he fell asleep.

The writer, this is where he takes a break, finishes his drink and smokes half a cigarette. For a split second you can see him in colour and even then he just looks gray. So you ask him,

« If a freight train leaves Cleveland at six thirty in the morning and travels North West to Seattle with a constant velocity of 65 miles an hour and hits your mother who is sleepwalking across the freeway would you go to church and pray for forgiveness? »

The writer laughs and smokes the other half of the cigarette. And then the power goes out and you're in complete and utter darkness. You light a match and see that the writer is gone. When the lights come back he's dead on the floor with a perfectly round bullet hole in the middle of his forehead and you realize that he's your brother.

So you leave and the streets outside make their own beats and rhythms as you tap tap tap running as fast as you can. Chopin wrote that waltz when he knew he could never go home again. And next thing you know you're standing in the Place de la Concorde with your collar up and it's pouring rain and you're crying because sometimes nothing's more comforting than a little pathetic fallacy.

And when I woke up I went and asked Freud what it meant. And stroked his beard and he smoked his pipe. « It doesn't mean anything », he said. « You're just crazy ». ☺

LIZA  
KOBRENSKY

## *Notes on Music, 1 of 2*

**T**HE most salient result of the pervasiveness of (illegal) digital downloading is the decreased value in owning music rather than simply having heard it in some format of varying degree of quality. Subsequently, one might conclude that the ownership of musical recordings in this environment conveys an increased personal investment and therefore credibility concerning the listener's relationship with the artist due to the rarity of this practice. This owes to the implicit emphasis placed on the importance of the work by the listener, while also marking their experience as one of legitimacy, both aurally and, in many cases, legally. However, the cultural value does not appear to match the monetary way it had in the past, as money is no longer a premise for experience. Looking to Pierre Bourdieu, this might be explained by observing that cultural capital has a necessary relationship to actual capital, and therefore in order to maximize familiarity in this accelerated listenership scenario, one cannot be bound by the shackles of financial investment.

While not seeking to be deterministic or fatalistic, there is some form of relationship between this accelerated listenership and the fleeting visibility of new artists and their heavily publicized releases. Publications can't rest on a single artist any more as their credibility is dependent on an insatiable (re: financially disinterested) audience that requires the perpetual restocking of the next-not-so-big-thing, assigning each a publicist's dream of hyperbole – that is if the reader has time to read the review located under the buyer's guide rating. In the past, a publication

would continue to contribute to the popularity of an already popular act to guarantee a stable readership, but this assumed a dedicated listenership, which we can conclude as becoming extinct. The last viable example of general music fans who hold a specific dedication to their favourite artist are most likely fans of Radiohead, who developed their relationship with that band largely before the hyper convenience of digital downloads.<sup>1</sup>

This is not to say that these music fans are no longer listening to music, but rather that there is no degree of dedication to specific artists – why bother waiting years for the next release from your favourite artist, soaking up any tidbit of information via the media's reportage, when that question on your facebook profile is met with a list at least twenty artists deep? If you are constantly being supplied with new artists, there is nothing at stake that results in the listener keenly following the activity of a specific artist. Gone are the days when there was any reason to interrogate a difficult or less than perfect album simply because it was released by an artist you already enjoy, because streamlined, portal websites are willing to tell you what other albums lack these obstacles – these differences are quantifiable to a hundredth of a degree, it seems. Whether a result of or the influencing factor behind this type of media function, the process of constantly looking for something new when the initial lustre has worn off the previous favoured release results in a reduced desire to purchase that previously favoured release. (Perhaps there is relevant scientific data pertaining to this that can

be located numerically in the « play count » column of iTunes, but I am unable to construct this sociological formula as of yet.)

Assuming that this trend is not all-encompassing, what measures can be taken to stand in opposition to the shift to an all digital system of distributing music? The obvious understanding is that an audience that still buys physical music releases must be one that is old enough that this is still understood to be the valid method of engaging with the aspect of culture. Concerning younger audiences, the material must penetrate a thick consumerism-weary barrier, built through a lifetime of exploitation at the hands of record labels – depending on who you ask, the very inception of CD technology into the recording industry was a manner of fighting the plateau of profits. Speaking to these two aspects, and sometimes both at once, it strikes me that there two main approaches that are taken by labels, which I will investigate in two sister articles: one on how hermetic labels engage in media and genres that reflect this evanescence and another on the appeal in the attempt to comprehensively capture moments in time and encapsulate them.

For the first case study, I'd like to examine the seemingly steadily increasing interest in the cassette tape format. The phenomenon itself is not new, much like the tendency of downloading it opposes. Historically speaking, tape labels have been prominent fixtures in the genres like noise, where the purported obsolescence of the format mirrors

1. Despite significant audiences, I do not include artists within Pop, Rap, Dance, etc. in this consideration as their single-based nature as genres does not lend the artists to this type of discussion. Beyond that, I do not include popular rock acts like Coldplay or the Killers because they each cater to an audience that, similar to Pop audiences, buys around two albums a year – namely, those band's albums.

Numerø have not only provided every known release from this studio, but literally every recording made. The DVD features menus that let you select the tape reels from the shelf (via photographs) and listen to the master tapes and alternate takes that were never given a proper release at the time of the studio's existence. Rounding out the product is a documentary made on the process of obtaining all this material – an elaboration on the material typically relayed through liner notes. The addition of this DVD to a package already comprised of photos, text and CD audio results in a release that will, no doubt, make it more difficult for a casual downloader to easily obtain the whole package.

A second case study is necessary to emphasize how this approach extends beyond the specialty of a boutique label. Drag City is a relatively popular label for new music, responsible for primary releases by artists such as Will Oldham, Bill Callahan, Jim O'Rourke, Six Organs of Admittance, and Joanna Newsom. However, in recent years, the label has entered into the practice of reissuing older artists' material. This has included Mayo Thompson's *Corky's Debt to His Father* (1969/1994), multiple albums by Mayo's group the Red Krayola, and at the behest of Ben Chasny (Six Organs of Admittance), Garry Higgin's lost album *Red Hash* (1973/2005). Most recently, more to my point, and to much acclaim, the label unearthed a collection of everything the proto-punk garage rock group Death had

ever recorded: ...*For the Whole World to See*. The band is perfect for these purposes as they only ever record seven songs and the only actual release of this 1974 session was a two track seven inch record that was limited to 500 copies. Apart from the comprehensive release qualifications, the band appeal to modern labels because they have a gimmick that journalists and bloggers can copy and paste without requiring any significant thought paid to the actual music (cf. M.I.A.); word had it the group's session was funded by Columbia Records president Clive Davis, but he requested the band change their name before releasing their material through the label, to which the enterprising young men resolutely refused.

Thus, not only does the Death album fulfill the safety of the musical relic given a comprehensive release, but it plays by contemporary requirements for new groups to gain publicity. A band today with the sound may receive accolades, but would be unable to escape nostalgia, while Death not only originate from the same cloth as the Stooges and MC5, but they are (were) even more obscure. This point is emphasized in the slightly unsettling caption on the back of the release: « *Death is: David Hackney: Guitars – Bobby Hackney: Bass, Vocals – Dennis Hackney: Drums* ». The band in the intervening time formed a gospel group and David died nine years ago, problematizing the ability for Death to be anything at this point. This paradox makes it especially interesting that the sticker on the

front of the release states: « *The incendiary single 'Politicians In My Eyes' w/o 'Keep On Knocking' along with the rest of their previously unreleased 1975 album* ». As this « album » was never released, it is difficult to understand in what manner the session was meant to be the album that now exists today – maybe some tracks would be cut, others added from subsequent sessions – but it is certainly presented as an album: there is a cover and there are lyrics instead of retrospective liner notes, which are handwritten on the inner sleeve in the manner of albums from that period. A closer look at the credits reveals the work of lead singer David Hackney's son, belying an easy acceptance that this was all initially intended in 1975. The material itself is brief, though equally varied. Stylistic influence, vocal delivery and song structure all shift dramatically for a release that is under a half an hour, which recalls the disparate quality of some of the Numerø releases as much as it subverts the potential notion that these recordings were intended for a single album and the degree of stylistic coherence implied in that form. Regardless, this functions as a comprehensive release, which by holding everything the band recorded, does immortalize them – they are – in one single release on your shelf.

CHRIS HERON



Robert Groh  
*Ketel One S.N.O.*  
Oil on Canvas  
36" x 48"

Part of *Consumed By Taïte: Visions of Biochemical Discharge*, an exhibition of recent work by Robert Groh running until May 2<sup>nd</sup> at Gallery 533 (533 Richmond St. West, Suite 203)



Robert Groh  
*Korean Tofu Stir Fry (Diptych)*  
Oil on Canvas  
48" x 120"

Part of *Consumed By Taste: Visions of Biochemical Discharge*, an exhibition of recent work by Robert Groh running until May 2<sup>nd</sup> at Gallery 533 (533 Richmond St. West, Suite 203)





# The Pleasure's All Mine, Zaftig Anna

*« Corpoream vocem quoque enim constare fatendum,  
Et sonitum, quoniam possunt impellere sensus. »  
— Lucretius, De Rerum Natura*

IN the small hamlette town of New Hindelsberg, where it was customary to check one's coat and prejudices at the door, the growing family of Monty and Rachel Kohlenberger lived accompanied by a quiet, Thoreauian desperation, where relief trickled down benevolent fingers with the frequency of miracles. The Kohlenbergers' small home was conveniently located at the abscissa of the Parliament Building's coordinates, affording Monty the ingress, egress, and regress necessary to fulfill the duties to Prime Minister Aagoon in his capacity of factotum; and though his stipend could comfortably provide for the needs of two individuals, it left much to be desired for the three hungry mouths sympathetically referred to as his children. Anna Kohlenberger, the oldest of the three, was a portly woman of sizeable consequence, whose good cheer could not be rivalled by her younger twin sisters of more modest proportions. Eleanor and Esme Kohlenberger, who were most known for their dizzying scientific contributions to the Stoot Museum's Research Colloquium, were responsible for theorizing Over-spaces that lay beyond two-dimensional Stootian space and *altheair* time. Though showered with praise for their daring, it was not the implications of their being an infinitely expanding universe that emerged outside the edges of their existence, that struck a nerve with the Academic community; but rather their outrageous suggestions that their Kingdom was part of a fleecy concrescence of cosmic particles; and that such a fibrous structure at the center of their galaxy was an accumulation in the navel of a demurengic being they alleged was known only as « Jack-Lemon ».

*“ Butterflies and ladybugs, they dance through my head. They sing sweet songs of rainbow, yellow, blue, pink, and red. Lollipops and lemon drops, they can dance too, but I'll tell you my tummy is the best place for youoo! ” sang Anna as she climbed three chairs and an ottoman piled high to reach for another sugarplum from the glass jar. The jar glistened and shined at the top of the glossy red wall unit where Monty and Rachel kept their best china, prosthetic limbs and oversized prophylactics. Immediately after Monty left for the Parliament Building and Rachel left to sow seeds of Sagacity in the lint fields that grazed their home, Anna found her opening. Eleanor and Esme were, of course, too busy conjuring a line of attack that would puncture their fibrous structure*

and validate their metaphysical claims, to notice Anna growing in all directions. Anna snatched the jar, spun off its sparkling gold lid, jammed her thumb and three stubby fingers into the rim and wiggled them until she could grasp a sugarplum. She popped the round diamond studded candy into her already salivating mouth and sucked the sweetness off her sweaty fleshy little fingertips. « Mmm-mmm, splendidious », she gaily whispered to herself proud of her daily stroke of genius. She climbed down from her makeshift staircase though leaving the palace grounds, ready to take on the world with her newfound glory. Although sanguine and blushing something — perhaps minor in magnitude and miniature in effect — was out of place. A tingling sensation crawled up her spine, set in her nape and rashed down along with her finalgulp of the saccharine residue from her candied friend, to the centre of her bloated belly tickling her navel.

The stentorian voice of Gottfried Von Goering — the bellow that snared the Gorgon-protected Crutched Friers in their own whirligig of Doom, the squall that coerced a thousand deputies of Hate to doff their moral outrages before claiming their own lives — resounded like the spumed death knells of a drowning man's faintly beating heart. The consumption of her mother's prognosticating sugarplums brought darling Anna news from that degenerate Over-world: tales of blistering He-Men of Hope and Despair, sugar-spun spectacles and penny dreadful mysteries that brought great excitement and diversion into her life, from a bodiless being whom in no small wonder of time she admitted as life-affirming companion. Von Goering's lips hung from the folding flaps of skin that met at the now glowing center of Anna's stomach, reciting in unsparring detail: the latest freefalling adventures of Djordje Mantzios, that aperohedric monster; the capture and torture of Justice Miaou; and Maureen It's much criticized use of Fekmer-kloshor's services on Gyk Zatlyn. Anna beamed with joy at these varied stories of depravity, succour, and superhuman endurance, saddened only by the thought of waiting an entire week for her next rendezvous (she did not seem to mind the mild variation on the weekly ritual that day — periodic intervals of vomiting during Von Goering's stories). Von Goering bid his tired comrade an emotional farewell and apprised her of Lemmon's projected sleeping habits for the

following week so that she could time her digestion synchronously with the hours of the actor's well-earned rest. Von Goering pulled his lips away from Lemmon's belly button, and then began to search aimlessly for his misplaced toothbrush; certain he could somehow taste bile on the tips of his tongues.

Between teatimes, joining disjointed prosthetic limbs, trying hopelessly to vie for sacred sister time, and many many meals, an enduring six days had relentlessly passed. It was time again for Anna to satisfy the urges of her tongue: Over-world gossip and underworld sweetness. 'Slam!' The front door shutting. 'Titter-tatter.' The back door flapping in the wind behind her mother's back. Anna's tongue began to salivate at these sounds of liberation. She inched her way past Esme and Eleanor's study, with the naïve expectation that they would be paying attention, and began to quicken her pace. Von Goering's last visit had left poor Anna Kohlenberger anxious for more. She grabbed three wooden chairs from the dining table, two in each of her hands and one between her hip and her elbow. She was not wasting any time at all! She stacked them on top of each other and made a dash for her father's leather ottoman. She threw it on top of the stack, leaving moist imprints of her chubby hands on either side of the leather in her almost panicked state. Now, do not be mistaken. The threat of her mother returning to the kitchen or her sisters emerging from their studies, were not at all factors contributing to her frenzy. No! Sagacity was in depiction and finding conclusive data that substantiated their galaxy's situation in the knot-like hollow of Jack-Lemmon, was not a study to be departed—especially not for the likes of Anna and her sweet mischief. Anna's panic was induced solely by her impatience for more, more, and more! At this point she had reached the top of the wall-unit; its glossy red finish reflecting the face of a bug-eyed drooling woman, her seductive smile, and her impervious neglect for the world around her. She grabbed the jar, leaped down to the ground and landed with a: 'Thud!' Her greedy hands opened the jar and thrust a sugarplum straight into her mouth, licking her fingers all at the same time to maximize her sugar saturation. She waited.

Von Goering's booming voice began to echo in the depths of her metaphysical universe. Anna could feel her belly starting to tingle, and she gleamed with

### Dandelion Ryan

« Dandelion Ryan is tryin' man, tryin' real hard not to get his feelings get in the way of work. But my main man Fekmeklosher is boinin' people left, right, center; every chance he can get. I heard this one story that his genglen contacts would come in all shet up. He'd stick 'em up, but when they were up on their feet, they'd wake up for a mornin' piss and realize he'd overstepped his boundaries and made a few unyins alterashuns. Mickey the Moop, Jappy Mortadel, Fella Seefifthe, Jackie Dempster, St. Anny the Tranny, Mick Xideo, Luca Mercury are all gunnin' for em. I ain't never bin one for kunfshuns, but this heavy. It's gonna be a bad scene tomorrow when I gotta shet up my main man. Then nobody ain't no gonna be able to help that poor busted ».

Three different guys got all weird takes on this Fekmeklosher which frankly, I think could be a bogus name, considering it all too conveniently sounds like something you'd say to your woman, yeah? Here's the skinny in case you wanna use the info for whatever that thing is you do.

Mamoulian: No relation to Rouben. Believe me, I checked on your behalf. I'll give you back *The Gay Desperado* the next time I see you. Brother, I watched the first half hour and you can keep it.

Streeter: Yeah, Streets wasn't bullshitting. This the real deal. I was just thinking the other day after I read this: Fekmeklosher MOTIVE.

Dandelion Ryan: Widely docu-

mented. There was a gangland hit on Fekmeklosher but my money's on that he's still kicking. Considering they found Ryan impaled on his surgical desk circumcised to the fucking waist. Can you believe that?

O.K. That was me. Send your returning post c/o Ginger, I mean, just until the heat dies down between you and Freddie. He's out for blood man. Watch your self. Your brother from another mother,

- Djordje

MOTHERFUKIN' POST-SCRIPT! Synchronicity or what! I'm opening my morning paper before I'm about to mail this sucker up, and they just eye dead Fekmeklosher's body! Some kid in Etobicoke bought a computer (can you say, « some assembly required ») and found body parts diced up in the box mixed in with a hard drive. And get this:

« With the remaining pieces of the puzzle found, forensic science now must play a gruesomely unappetizing game of 'pin-the-tale-on-the-donkey', with the hopes of identifying the murder victim » (« CARCASS SHIPPED TO 13-YEAR-OLD AS COMPUTER », *Bolymong Express*, vol. XXIII, no. 7, March 9th, 2009).

P.P.S. I knew this would get better if only I waited.

« The case of a 13-year-old boy living in Etobicoke who received the mangled remains of a dead body where his computer should have been has just gotten stranger. Centre of Forensic Sciences has identified the body as missing person 'Dr. Arnold Fekmeklosher', born Archie Fekner, who in actuality possessed no license to practice medicine or surgery. Fekner was born in Toronto in 1943, and briefly owned 'Archie's Fekner's Gourmet Butcher Shop', a known front for a vice-den in Old Cabbagetown during the late sixties... can imagine the shock of young Jonathan Tso, who instead of finding his top of the line, high-speed computer, found a macabre assortment of human remains, which perplexingly included a necklace of human foreskin and an uncircumcised member (Why am I not surprised? - D.) with the word 'FRAUD' carved into it ». (« COMPUTER CARCASS IDENTIFIED: FEKMEKLOSHER DEAD! » *Bolymong Express*, vol. XXIII, no. 10, March 12th, 2009.)

If it wasn't enough that a two-bit operation like the Bolymong gets away with saying « necklace of human foreskin » in print, how much you wanna bet that if you got Moop, Seefifthe, Xideo, and the rest of those hoods in a room with that necklace, they'd all fit in like a hand in glove? ■

JEAN MARC  
AH-SEN



Phil Bergerson  
Untitled

Raymondville, Texas, 2006

Featured in *Sublime Encounters*, an exhibition of works by Phil Bergerson running until April 18<sup>th</sup> at Stephen Bulger Gallery (1026 Queen St. West)

## Visual Affect in Chris Ware's *Jimmy Corrigan, the Smartest Kid on Earth*: Part VI

### THE

next section involves focusing on dream sequences that are visually affective due to Ware's techniques. By focusing on these specific sequences I hope to explain their emotive capabilities in relation to Ware's artistic choices. I will be looking at the following four dream scenes: the hypnopompic plane scene, the father-son/bed-bar scene, the size-shifting Super-Man/infanticide scene, and the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition paternal rejection scene.

The hypnopompic plane scene (see Fig. 9) exemplifies Groensteen's notion of braiding<sup>1</sup> via the re-appearance of the robot and the peaches from Jimmy's previous dreams in a new context; the peaches are a more immediate example of braiding because they appear immediately before the first panel of the hypnopompic plane scene (see Fig. 7). Ware's usage of braiding, then, helps to convey Jimmy's (un)consciousness; this externalization process produces an odd, disorienting, surreal image that the interactive participants experience. The visual affectiveness of this scene is rooted in the abnormal amalgamation of reality and non-reality. As well, it should be noted that the characterization of this scene as surreal is slightly problematic because "surreal" signifies « *sharing the qualities of surrealist art; bizarre, dreamlike* » (OED) and this scene is a semi-dream. Put differently, it is problematic to characterize something as

dream-like that is a (semi-) dream. In response to this quibble, I would suggest that the aesthetic nature of this scene is visually affective primarily due to its incongruent nature; the blurred lines of reality simply add to its visual clout. Moreover, this scene also aligns itself with certain characteristics of the surrealist movement: « *irrational juxtaposition of realistic images* » (e.g. the robot-peach-dove combination) and the « *creation of mysterious symbols* » (e.g. the symbolic dove, which does not appear anywhere else in JC) (OED). Thus Ware's surrealist mimicry within the comics medium is quite provocative and visually stunning.

The father-son/bar-bed scene (see Fig. 10) is one of the more visually affective dream sequences in JC. Not unlike the hypnopompic plane scene, there is a blending of non-reality and reality, which Raeburn comments on in a more technical manner:

[w]hen Jimmy and his father first meet in a bar, Ware abandons the omniscient visual narration and draws instead Jimmy's subjective state of mind. The bar room becomes his parents' bedroom, where he was conceived, and snippets of the pair's real dialogue slip invisibly in and out of the imaginary murder Jimmy daydreams of committing. By substituting first-person for third-person in the visual narration, Ware liter-

ally builds Jimmy's emotions into the book. (70)

I would like to extrapolate and subsequently expand upon Raeburn's explanation by suggesting that it is the stark juxtaposition between the imaginative violence and the « *snippets* » of reality that constitute the emotive capabilities of this scene that visually affect the interactive participants. For instance, the panel where a piece of glass is wedged in Jimmy's father's eye-socket is contrasted with Jimmy saying, « *I brought you a basket of fruit* ». This specific panel amounts to a very bizarre, grotesque image with equally disturbing subject matter. It could be argued, however, that the undeniable fantastical nature of this scene diminishes its potency, but the visual affect is still in operation—if not further intensified—by means of the *magically-appearing-modality-changing mug* (i.e. brown to gray to transparent and three dimensional), which makes this fantasy sequence more realistic, and hence more stunning. Moreover, the *mise en scène* is inherently polysemic due to the different interpretive paths available (e.g. martial bed, Oedipus complex, primal scene, patricide, usurpation, etc.); these analytical avenues enhance both the visual affectiveness and the overall frightening nature of the father-son/bar-bed scene.

The size-shifting Super-Man/infanticide sequence (see Fig. 11-15) is visually

<sup>1</sup> Braiding involves the networking or bridging of certain aspects or fragments of some panels to other aspects or fragments of other panels (Groensteen 146).

them. Moreover, the visual affect of these scenes is intensified by what Kress and van Leeuwen refer to as the « network »: « Networks seek to show the multiple interconnections between participants. Any participant in a network ('node') can form an entry-point from which its environment can be explored [...] » (84).<sup>1</sup> The relevance of the network

<sup>1</sup> Kress and van Leeuwen continue their discussion of the network by stating that, « [...] the vectors or lines ('links') between these participants can take on many different values, the value of signification ('a means b'), of combination ('a goes with b'), of composition ('a contains b'): the essence of the link between two participants is that they are, in some sense, next to each other, or close to each other, associated with each other » (84). The rest of this quotation is worth noting because some of the components of networking are applicable to an analysis of Fig. 26 and 27 because depending on how the interactive participants read and interpret these narrative-revealing scenes there could be different emotional reactions—i.e. when the interactive participants realize the true familial history.

in relation to these specific scenes in *JC* involves its emphasis on entry-points because the layouts themselves also have manifold entry-points. For instance, in Fig. 22 the interactive participant can enter into the genealogical-diagrammatic layout at one or more of the following images: the desk, the « *Now* » panel, the grandparents, the top-left panel (N.B. the adjacent panel is interestingly connected by means of a transgressing window frame), and so on and so forth. The sublime nature of the genealogical-diagrammatic layouts, then, is evident in the dazzling amount of entry-points and its non-linear nature, which attests to the process of perception as an aesthetic end in itself (Shklovsky). Moreover, the idea that the visual structure of arrows and boxes foregrounds procedure over substantive content (Kress and van Leeuwen 66) and the idea that technical images (maps, diagrams, etc.) present an objective attitude (143), speaks to the genealogical-diagrammatic layouts in *JC* insofar as the sterilizing, scientific visual rhetoric of these scenes produces a deep reverence experienced by the distanced interactive participants—i.e. distanced by perceptual-slowness and sci-

entific objectivity.

After having meticulously analyzed a plethora of images or sequences of images in Ware's *JC*—the Super-Man scene, four dream sequences, the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition scenes, and the genealogical-diagrammatic layout scenes—I hope to have demonstrated how they are visually affective in their own right and can—if applicable—be characterized in relation to the notions of the grotesque, the surreal, the sublime, and/or the pathetic. In coming to a close in this exposition on the image-emotion relationship in *JC*, I am reminded of what Wolk states at the beginning of his chapter on Ware and how my analysis of the visual affect in *JC* has added a whole new layer of meaning to it: « Ware's work has an emotional range of one note, and he sings it at the top of his lungs, with gusto if not exactly pride ». ■

MICHAEL  
SLOANE

## Matthew Forsythe's Carpet-Pulling *Ojingogo*

A gigantic, awe-inducing, fur-tussled creature—the size of a thumb prior to being licked—plucks an iconic umbrella from the very speech balloon where it was pictographically uttered and hands it to a small girl, the latter of which has, at this point, befriended—or, better put, tamed—a recently truncated *ojingo*, Korean for « squid ». Where do I begin?

Matthew Forsythe's *Ojingogo* (Drawn & Quarterly 2008) begins with a prologue—an introduction that could perhaps be better labeled as a visual, non-linguistic epigraph which happens to be very emblematic of *Ojingogo*'s off-filter, quirky, blithely deceptive nature—that shows a bird with an over-sized cranium squawking in Hangul (i.e. a Korean script that is based on the shape of the mouth when it utters a sound) spotting what appears to be a worm jutting out from the ground; the bird swoops down to pluck the delectable grub from the soil only to realize, after pulling a long, scale-laden tentacle from the depths of the earth, that the once innocent grub is actually some sort of underground creature that has, at this point, a choke-hold grasp around the bird, who is, in what appears to be no more than a nanosecond, swiftly pulled beneath the surface down into an abyss—around 20,000 leagues, give or take. To evoke a cliché, then, the hunter has become the hunted, which is amidst blatant Freudian overtones; the binary of appearance versus reality is in play and the reader is given an indication of what the

forthcoming journey will entail within the wonderland that is *Ojingogo*.

Following *Ojingogo*'s visual, non-linguistic epigraph, there are five chapters, each of which traverse many different realms in a rather disruptive, tumultuous manner, barring the implicit negative connotations, while simultaneously achieving, at the very least, a threadbare story that finds more of its *jouissance* in the slippery parts rather than an ultra-cohesive, logic-based narrative whole—a contention I will touch upon at a later point. For now, however, I would like to give a sketch of the pleasurable components of Forsythe's graphic novel debut.

Briefly then, *Ojingogo* proper—not to discount the salience of the aforementioned introduction—opens with the picture-snapping, exploratory temperament of Voguchi, a thinly veiled version of Forsythe's photographer friend, documenting glimpses of the serene and mystical environs around her. Her camera, an abject friend and foe throughout Voguchi's (mis)adventures, sprouts legs and prints off fascinating photographs that she collects in an album. From here, after the reader is introduced to the obtuse block creature that plays an integral and at times benign role as an overseer, a participant-observer within Forsythe's exotic, symbiotic, and savage ecosystem, Voguchi's extravagant unexpected undertaking increases dramatically, exponentially even, to the point of witnessing and experiencing the pecking

order firsthand. For instance, not unlike the big-brained bird, Voguchi, after almost being masticated and subsequently devoured by the block creature, gets entangled in a scuffle with the protruding scale-laden tentacle that has snagged her camera, and is then sucked down to the darkened depths of some unfounded plane of existence. It is, however, this very tentacle that is synecdochically presented that will turn out to be the shrunken *ojingo* that will accompany Voguchi—in a partnership that is not completely dissimilar to Watterson's *Calvin and Hobbes*—in search of her missing camera, for which the reader is privy to certain information that Voguchi is not—i.e. regarding the *actual* camera captor (the faceless sasquatch)—and he or she is given the opportunity to observe the highs and lows of Voguchi's quest that unfurls and unfolds throughout the remainder of *Ojingogo*.

As a way in which to avoid delving into an excessive amount of plot description, I would like to provide a gambit of synchronic snapshots drawing from different chapters in the vein of Voguchi's very own initial mechanical appropriations of the fantastic, the phantasmagoria even, in order to hopefully entice you into observing for yourself the cute and comical hurdles that Voguchi, *ojingo*, and a cast of other otherworldly characters experience throughout *Ojingogo*.

*A disgruntled six-legged mammal crosses its forearms in front of its chest and gri-*

maces as a storm cloud hovers solely over its head and emits a torrential downpour until Voguchi appears with an umbrella to alleviate the beast's troubles.

Aware of the falling Voguchi, in a scene reminiscent of nostalgic slapstick, the ojingo nonchalantly scuttles off the page only to return with an arboreal barrel of water to supposedly cushion her fall. Voguchi, after ever so gracefully landing in the bucket, emerges drenched and fuming and lunges after the ojingo, who, although escaping Voguchi's raging fists, ends up in the belly of a horrendous, gigantic fish.

Voguchi, atop the enormous abject camera creature, yelling at the ojingo, tugs at a fishing rod that has the faceless sasquatch hanging by a thread, afraid for its life.

Now if I can speak hypertextually for a brief moment—prior to picking up my loose analytical thread and briefly interpolating Forsythe's wonderful graphic novel—*Ojingogo* did not haphazardly materialize out of some ethereal presence. *Ojingogo* began as a blog strip, moved to the mini-comics and/or webcomics medium in 2004 and then, finally, became a book released by Drawn and Quarterly, Montreal's revered publishing company with a more than respectable roster. Moreover, *Ojingogo* has garnered a noteworthy degree of attention: it was featured in *The Year's Best Graphic Novels, Comics and Manga* in 2005, it has been nominated for two Eisner Awards, it was the winner of an Exposine in 2006, and it is currently nominated for the 2009 Doug Wright Award and the 2009 National Cartoonist Society Award. Thus,

at the very least, in lieu of my discursive, cerebral remarks, take the aforementioned points as a more objective frame of reference and legitimately consider Forsythe's work.

*The obtuse block creature sits atop what appears to be a humpback whale.*

Forsythe's *Ojingogo* is a multi-tiered labyrinth. It is a tricky trek through a landscape that ostensibly rebuffs any imposition of conventional narrative structure or Aristotelian unity and vice for a fantastical internal logic that presents a chaotic world—confounding, yet captivating—which is, if I may posit an apropos neologism, *illusory lucidity*: a sensical, plausible narrative with undercurrents of instability that jut and jar every so often. These minor and sometimes major tectonic shifts are enough to compel the reader to re-evaluate their understanding of the text at any particular point. More specifically, then, couched within Forsythe's delightful, tersely-oriented, playful style—a *Weltanschauung* that entertains those imaginative recesses of the unconscious and traces its aesthetic foci, its iconic genealogy back to Korean cartoon and comics culture—*Ojingogo* provides the reader with temporary footholds throughout the text only to complicate matters further by the surreal happenings, the visual twists and turns, that ultimately torque the reader's frame of reference with the flip of almost every page. The reader approaches the asymptote of understanding but Forsythe is quick to yank the rug from beneath; he playfully attacks and deconstructs those foundational pillars of initial hermeneutic comprehension that are, in all actual-

ity, relative to *Ojingogo*, built on sand.

Forsythe's carpet-pulling, then, includes, and seems to hover around, sublime role-reversals that challenge the quasi-calified hierarchies—occasionally via spontaneous size-shifting processes, within the world of *Ojingogo*: i) a faceless sasquatch, introduced as the alpha-male figure, is later minimized and used as crocodile bait by Voguchi; ii) the obtuse block creature, guardian of the rest, is the victim of a mutiny instigated by small square creatures that tie it down in a very *Gulliver's Travels* fashion—damn those Lilliputians; iii) the initially small camera creature more than triples in size due to what the reader can only assume to be the result of the faceless sasquatch's Frankenstein-ing (i.e. at a later point it is revealed that the faceless sasquatch creature enlarged one of the small square creatures that accidentally wound up amidst this bedlam). The creature ends up, for a brief lapse of time, betraying Voguchi and siding with the faceless sasquatch only to defect shortly thereafter and nearly vaporize, but really minimize the sasquatch itself; iv) an elderly man—a puppeteer of sorts—activates a marionette, one realm-removed, and intervenes during a chase scene as a sort of *deus ex machina*, nonchalantly usurping any previously established « natural » order.

In the vein of Forsythe's simple, approachable, entertaining, alluring, cute, comical, and minimalist style: read *Ojingogo*.

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